

Caitlin Harrison

Pagan Scenes and Dances

for orchestra

Each movement of *Pagan Scenes and Dances* is named after the points of The Pagan Wheel of the Year. The wheel traces the change of seasons with ceremonial occasions to celebrate or reflect on the current environmental state. The most prominent themes are from darkness to light, along with tracing the fertility of spring to the summer and autumn harvests before the death of winter. The wheel is cyclical, with every year end, *Samhain*, going into *Yule* to start the pattern again. With this in mind, the piece could technically be performed starting at any movement, although most effective would be beginning with *Yule*, *Beltane* or *Lughnasadh*. Many of the pagan festivals correlate to modern ones such as *Yule* and Christmas, *Imbolc* and Candlemas, *Ostara* and Easter, and *Samhain* and Halloween.

I. Yule — Scene

Yule starts the pagan wheel at the very darkest moment of the year, the winter solstice. Despite the stark and bleak landscape *Yule* is reminiscent of lighter times, a likely tactic to help Pagans of centuries gone by get through the harshest time of year. The movement begins by setting the barren scene with delicate higher textures in the upper strings and wind, before the darker depths of the lower instruments enter. A light snowflake-like dance takes over for the second half of the movement as the darkness begins to dissipate.

II. Imbolc — Dance

One of the more ceremonial movements, *Imbolc* symbolises the light emerging from the darkness. Like a candle in the darkness, the glockenspiel guides the deep tones of the lower instruments upwards until the emergence of the Cor Anglais solo. Whilst the slow 3/4 metre and sombre mood resembles a sarabande, the 'dance' element remains abstract until the solo.

III. Ostara — Dance

Ostara marks the spring equinox, symbolising rebirth and the boom of life one sees in nature. This is represented through the blooming fanfares in the brass and large tutti chords, with the offbeat rhythms bringing contrast to the primal dance.

IV. Beltane — Scene

After the bloom of spring comes the beginning of summer, *Beltane* (or May Day). *Beltane* celebrates the fertility of the lighter months, with bonfires traditionally lit as a purification ritual. Harking back to the more ceremonial mood of *Imbolc*, this movement contains unruly solos in the clarinet and piccolo, untameable like a flame or nature itself.

V. Litha — Dance

Litha celebrates the summer equinox, also called Midsummer, the lightest part of the year. The sun is worshipped with dancing around and jumping over bonfires. The 12/8 metre forms a clear and joyful dance, with bouncing dotted rhythms littering the canonic string theme. Some Pagan cultures also view this as the win of light over dark; the second half of the movement represents more of a battleground, with loud and turbulent gestures littering the soundscape before the opening light theme ultimately wins.

VI. Lughnasadh (*LOO-na-sa*) — Scene

Lughnasadh is a reflective occasion that thanks the Gaelic God, Lugh, for the year's harvest. The movement itself is a prayer, contrasting the rest of the work not only in theme but also texture as the instrumentation is heavily stripped back from the previous movement. The origins of *Lughnasadh* has funeral themes, marking the beginning of the death of the earth for this cycle. The prayer is also cautious, as the people ask for a forgiving winter to come.

VII. Mabon — Dance

The autumn equinox marks not only the final harvest but mostly importantly the beginning of the earth's decay. It is a dark death, with unpredictable rhythms and timbres littering *Mabon* as wild themes in the oboe and other solos represent the oncoming chaos and decent.

VIII. Samhain (*SAH-win*) — Scene

The cycle comes to and end with *Samhain*, what we commonly refer to as Halloween. The veil is at its thinnest between the living and the dead. Grand gestures open the movement before haunting themes take over in the brass and solo bassoon. The piece ends with a final dramatic run into a wild and terrifying darkness.

Double Bass

for London Euphonia Orchestra

Pagan Scenes and Dances

for orchestra

I. Yule

Caitlin Harrison

♩ = 120 *desolate*

21 A

fp *fp*

29 8

fp

46 B C

19 17

Double Bass

II. Imbolc

♩ = 80-90 *sarabande-like*

Musical staff with rests and markings for a triplet of 3 measures and a double bar of 2 measures.

11 A 12 B

Musical staff with notes, dynamics (*f*, *mf*), and articulation (accents, slurs).

31

Musical staff with notes and dynamics (*f*, *mf*).

42 C

Musical staff with notes and dynamics (*p*).

53 D

Musical staff with notes and dynamics (*p*).

61

Musical staff with notes and dynamics (*pp*).

Double Bass

III. Ostara

$\text{♩} = 60$ *bursting*

sfz sfz sfz fp sfz sfz sfz fp

8

9 pizz. mf

22

3 9 sfz sfz sfz fp

38

4 arco ff f 3

47

mf 3 f 3 pizz. ff pizz. ff

DOUBLE BASS

IV. Beltane

TACET *attacca*

Double Bass

V. Litha

Vivace ♩ = 90-105

6 A 10 B 8

A musical staff in bass clef with a 12/8 time signature. It contains three measures of whole rests. Above the staff, the numbers 6, 10, and 8 are placed above the first, second, and third measures respectively. Above the number 6 is a box containing the letter 'A', and above the number 10 is a box containing the letter 'B'.

25 C 6 D

A musical staff in bass clef. It begins with two measures of whole rests. Above the first measure is a box containing the letter 'C', and above the second measure is a box containing the letter 'D'. The number 6 is placed above the first measure. The staff then continues with musical notation starting at measure 33. The first note is a quarter note G2 with a forte (ff) dynamic marking. The notation consists of eighth and quarter notes with stems pointing down.

33

A musical staff in bass clef with musical notation starting at measure 33. The notation consists of eighth and quarter notes with stems pointing down.

36

A musical staff in bass clef with musical notation starting at measure 36. The notation consists of eighth and quarter notes with stems pointing down.

39 E pizz.

A musical staff in bass clef with musical notation starting at measure 39. Above the staff, a box contains the letter 'E' and the word 'pizz.' is written. The notation includes a piano (p) dynamic marking, a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic marking, and a hairpin crescendo leading to a piano (p) dynamic marking, followed by a hairpin decrescendo leading to a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic marking.

43

A musical staff in bass clef with musical notation starting at measure 43. The notation consists of quarter and eighth notes with stems pointing down.

48 F

A musical staff in bass clef with musical notation starting at measure 48. Above the staff, a box contains the letter 'F'. The notation consists of quarter notes with stems pointing down. Dynamics markings include mezzo-forte (mf) and forte (f).

51 poco rit. 2 2

A musical staff in bass clef with musical notation starting at measure 51. Above the staff, the text 'poco rit.' is written. The notation includes a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic marking and a piano (p) dynamic marking. The staff ends with two measures of whole rests, with the number 2 placed above each measure.

DOUBLE BASS

VI. Lughnasadh

TACET

Double Bass

VII. Mabon

♩. = 80-90 *macabre*

pizz. *f*

6

12

19

24

29 [A] arco *mf*

44

47 [B] 2

51 pizz. *f* 2

Double Bass

56

Musical staff 56-61: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Measures 56-61 contain eighth and sixteenth notes with accents and dynamic markings. Five fermatas are placed above measures 57, 59, 60, 61, and 62.

62

Musical staff 62-67: Bass clef, 5/8 time signature. Measure 62 has a fermata. A box labeled 'C' is above measure 63. Measures 64-67 contain eighth notes with accents. A dynamic marking 'p' is below measure 64.

68

Musical staff 68-74: Bass clef, 5/8 time signature. Measures 68-74 contain eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings.

75

Musical staff 75-79: Bass clef, 5/8 time signature. Measures 75-79 contain eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings.

80

Musical staff 80-83: Bass clef, 5/8 time signature. Measures 80-83 contain eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings.

84

Musical staff 84-86: Bass clef, 5/8 time signature. A box labeled 'D' is above measure 84. The word 'arco' is written below measure 84. A dynamic marking 'f' is below measure 84. Measures 84-86 contain sixteenth notes with slurs and dynamic markings.

87

Musical staff 87-89: Bass clef, 5/8 time signature. Measures 87-89 contain sixteenth notes with slurs and dynamic markings.

90

Musical staff 90-92: Bass clef, 5/8 time signature. Measures 90-92 contain sixteenth notes with slurs and dynamic markings.

93

Musical staff 93-95: Bass clef, 5/8 time signature. Measures 93-95 contain sixteenth notes with slurs and dynamic markings.

attacca

